Okehampton
~~Tavistock~~ Rural District.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health,
for the year 1942.

Mr.Chairman and gentlemen,

I have had the honour to be your Medical Officero of Health since October 8st,1942,as your M.O.H.,Dr.Allen-Price has joined the R.A.M.C.It follows that I am unacquainted with much that may have occurred during the first nine months of the year,which must cause some dulness,but perhaps a commendable briefness in this report.

The population of this district is given as 13,580.

The number of deaths from all causes was 191,or 14.per 1000, compared with a rate of 13.5 per 1000 in England & Wales

Of these deaths 60 were from Heart Disease,
26 from Cancer,
4 from Tuberculosis.

128 deaths were in people over 60 years of age.

The number of births was 200,(6 of these illegitimate),or 14.7 per 1000,compared with a rate of 15.8 for England & Wales.

There was no serious outbreak of any infectious disease.and I am glad to be able to report that there were no cases of diphtheria,a very satisfactory record which must be attributed to a great extent to the high percentage of inoculations.

Water Supplies.

It is to be hoped that some general scheme for the better supply of pure water will be put in hand after the War.In many farms the supply is anything but satisfactory.

Milk Supplies.

There is no doubt in my mind that the present conditions under which milk is collected and distributed are thoroughly unsatisfactory.While much has been done to improve shippons,the chief danger lies in the lack of proper precautions in cleansin utensils.This is aggravated in many cases by poor water supply. I cannot help feeling that there is present a grave possibility of the outbreak and spread of serious epidemics.I am sure that much more could and should be done by everyone concerned in the handling of milk to improve the present deplorable state of affairs,especially amongst the smaller producers.

I have the honour to be,
Sirs,
your obedient servant,
(signed)
G.W.G.Hughes.
Lt.Col.